


December 2010

DEAKIN'S TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND

Facts about NZ

NZ has lots of rivers that are made from ice called glaziers.

There is a lot of snow that melts in summer time.



Thats me sneaking
in a game when my
dad and pop were not
looking

DAY 6

The weather has been good but not good enough for flying long distances. Dad and Terry could not beat the record. There were not enough wave winds in the mountains.

Today was a lazy day. I tried to ride the pink bike that we found in the unit. I did not fall off. It was a big bike. We watched dad go up with Terry Delore, the world record holder. We went to the supermarket and bought food. We decided not to go fishing, instead we would have a relaxing day. So I played with my Nintendo DS and played puzzle games with pop for most of the day.



Briefing

The glider pilots meet to check out the weather for the day.



Then dad came home and we helped Terry de-rig the glider and then pop made a great dinner and desert. Tomorrow dad and I will go fishing before we start driving back to Christchurch. We are flying back to Australia on Sunday morning.

Today is the last day in Omarama. We have to go back to Christchurch tomorrow.

Thanks to Mrs C and my class 2 C for reading my newsletters. I hope you liked my stories.

I have had a great trip. Pop and dad had a great trip too.



December

2017
WZ



This a biplane. It has two wings.



Chad's Friday Blog

Although we don't leave Christchurch Airport till Sunday morning, today was my last flying day. The weather has been fairly similar for most of the week with a high to the west of NZ and no chance of the big NW winds. This meant west winds on the west coast, east winds on the east coast and lots of convergence and thermals right up the middle. I did get some time in the wave on Monday and Terry says it's not all it's cracked up to be anyway. "Once you've seen it once it's just bloody cold and miserable. Good if you want long flights but mostly not that scenic". I think I've seen more of the country side with the weather I've had anyway.

Today Terry showed me the countryside to the north. "That's my home turf near my home club. Well, actually anything from the south of the south island to the north of the south island is my home turf". I added that maybe some of the north island is his home turf as well. He just laughed. Our climbout was rather high at around 4000ft today going over to Magic Mountain as he didn't want to waste an hour screwing around trying to get out of the valley. He finds a thermal, turns off the motor and calls "gee you're doing a good job of centering this one". I took the cue and took over the controls. At 6,000ft he mentions "I'll give you a minty if you reach 9,000ft, two if you reach 10,000ft". Nothing like something to aim for. I straighten out and head a little east to get the higher edge of the convergence line and reach 9,000ft. "you might be actually learning something finally" he mentions while handing over a minty. Before I get to 10,000ft he says to get going. I miss out on the second one but get it a little later on.

We went to the the east of lake Ohau and just north of it we jump west to the next set of ridges. Running along the spines of the ridges was working really well with lots of convergence and thermals allowing you to just pull up and slow down. Every once in a while he would say to me "isn't that one strong enough for you" so I'd turn, remembering for the next one like it but when I did he'd say "what are you turning in this one for"?

As we went past Mt. Cook we only just missed a massive avalanche on the eastern side which was throwing out a massive cloud of dust. Terry was rather annoyed as he still hadn't seen one happen. We left the Mackenzie Basin and went past Two Thumbs Range. After that was the Erewhon valley (which is nowhere spelled backwards) although Terry says glider pilots call it the "Erewhon Shithole" as the easterly always comes in and kills everything. We were hoping to reach Aurthurs Pass but the westerly and easterly winds were coming in quite fast and Terry said "we've got about 20 minutes before this place shuts down and we're in trouble". I thought he would turn around but we kept heading south. After a while I questioned him and he said he love to head south but he couldn't as it was dead back there. "But isn't it dying here too" I asked. "Yes but I'm hoping for a climb up ahead which will give us glide back to the south". We reached the hopeful cloud and.....nothing. "I think we may be in trouble" Terry said. After what I had seen this guy do over the last couple of days this must have been bad. All I knew was that I had no idea where we could go if we did get low whilst stuck in the "Erewhon Shithole".

By this stage we were only about 20km from Aurthurs Pass and we had no choice but to head south, this time low and winding between the Snow covered mountain peaks. He kept trying to give me a mental picture of where the wind was with both airmasses (west and east) coming up either side but I just got confused. He said he'd better fly as he couldn't point me in the right direction because he didn't know where to go himself. "The easterly has never come up this far before". At one stage he asked ME which side of the mountain peak we should go. Now I know we were in trouble. It was amazing to watch him climb 200ft in weak lift because he knew he needed it to cross a saddle 5km ahead. Each time something didn't work he'd shrug his shoulders and say let's try up ahead. It was about this time I mentioned I give him some jelly babies if he got back to the Mackenzie Basin. Nothing like something to aim for.

On the way back we were running right along the range that divides the west and east sides. The west side was completely clouded over and was spilling over the lower saddles towards us while the east was blue and dead. To the west the odd lonely peak stuck out in a sea of cloud which stretched on forever. It was an amazing sight. I've had trouble trying to juggle enjoying the scenery, learning from the master and documenting all this on my camera. Usually after an hour or so I've overloaded my brain so I just sit back and enjoy the ride.

Somehow after much groveling about 3/4 the way from the mountain tops and not allowing to get low Terry says "well where in the Mackenzie Basin, where's my jelly babies? They were rightfully handed over and he calls "your aircraft". Sometimes I dreaded taking over as I knew I'd just lose all the hard fought height he'd made or he'd mention how much higher we'd be if we just done something else. Our finalglide took us over Lake Pukaki which is a photographers dream with it's Aqua coloured water. All the lakes around here are crystal clear but Lake Pukaki is fed by a glacier which gives it an out of this world shade of almost aqua colour.

We were about 50km out and I knew we'd have a strong head component down low so was conserving my speed as to me things looked marginal. "Racing speed now Chad, let's get cracking". Flap 1 and up to 110kt with 8kt of sink on the dial. "We're all good as the convergence line is usually just up ahead". The sky was completely blue but just he said it the vario improved. Little Ben was in our way now so head slightly off track to get home. "Go further away or you'll get heavy sink from the hill. O.k. so I head even further off track. Now I can't see the airfield because of a 700ft high ridge. Meanwhile Terry's in the front seat whistling away. "turn left here over that low saddle and follow the ridge along. Now I'm about 10km out at 700ft at 110kt ridge soaring with a strong and rough easterly. Within no time things turn from low to how do we get down. I ask Terry what's the best way to cross the circuit from to which he replies "like this, my aircraft". We whistle over the airfield and pull up just outside the chalet for the last time. Time to de-rig.

I've had the most amazing time here at Omarama and made many new friends. Terry of course has been wonderful but also there is the passion of Gavin Wills here who is just happy to see a content pilot after landing. Trevour Mollard who is part of the club here has been really helpful to me helping me to get airborne on Monday and converting me to the LS6 on Tuesday. There are many others and it's just a pity to have to say goodbye. At least I know I will be back one day. Perhaps I'll return and do what a couple of the Bathurst guys are doing here. They've hired the club gliders and Trevour is basically doing led and follows with them for two weeks. I'll bet they haven't seen what I've seen though.

It's sad leaving here.

FINAL DAY

